GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5944
ANSWERED ON:31.08.2001
AUCTION OF PRIME TIME SLOTS
MAHBOOB ZAHEDI;T. GOVINDAN

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prasar Bharati is planning to lease out the National channel;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for auction of prime time slots of channels; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a): No Sir.

(b) : Does not arise.

(c) & (d): Prasar Bharati had taken a decision to auction bulk airtime on DD-Metro channel so as to bring it in line with the prevailing market situation. Prasar Bharati has informed that the time slots between 7 p.m. − 9 p.m. and 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. were allotted to M/s Nine Network Australia Pty. Ltd., through an open bid process, for a period of one year, expiring on 10.9.2001 and 15.10.2001 respectively. The time slots from 10 p.m. to 0030 a.m. were already vacant. Therefore, open bids were invited for the airtime from 7 p.m. to 0030 a.m. with a floor price of Rs. 115 crores, for 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., and without any floor price for the slots from 11 p.m. to 0030 a.m. In response, only one bid was received for the 11 p.m. to 00 hours slot, from M/s Moving Pictures Company India Private Limited with an offer of Rs. 50 lakhs net. Prasar Bharati then took a decision to invite fresh bids for 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. slots without fixing any floor price. Even though three bids were received, these were considered too low and rejected.